

# Vanessa Summers

State Representative

District 99



How To Reach  
Representative

**Vanessa Summers**

## RESIDENCE

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## LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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## ANSWER THE QUESTIONNAIRE ONLINE

[www.state.in.us/R99](http://www.state.in.us/R99)

Fall, 1999

Dear Friends,

Autumn is here and the General Assembly will meet for Organization Day on Tuesday, November 16. We will consider a package of bills that week, including an economic development package that would benefit many Hoosiers throughout the state.

The 2000 session is a "short" session, meaning we will begin session January 10 and finish before March 15.

In the short session, each House member may introduce only five pieces of legislation. While we will not re-open the two-year state budget passed earlier this year, the possibility remains that we may fine-tune some of the appropriations outlined in that legislation.

Inside this newsletter is my legislative questionnaire. The questions will provide some details about the topics that may be brought before the legislature. Your opinion is valuable to me as I consider how I will vote.

If you have any concerns or suggestions for change in your state government, please contact me at 232-9600.

Sincerely,

*Vanessa J. Summers*



## 2000 Page Program

Serving as a page during the 2000 session allows any child age 13 or older the opportunity to gain a firsthand glimpse of how the legislative system works. Students will be excused from school on the day they are serving as a page and will spend the entire day at the Statehouse.

Interested students should send me their name, parent or guardian's name, address, phone number, school and two different dates when the student could come to the Statehouse between January 10 and February 29, 2000.

Please remember session is short and places fill up fast, so apply as soon as possible.

*Our mission is to create an environment for Indiana's youth that is conducive to both fun and learning, and which will stimulate student interest in government and community involvement. To that end, we plan to educate students regarding legislative processes; to give students an opportunity to meet their community leaders; to encourage student involvement in the community; and to introduce students to other students around the state.*

# Educating Indiana's Children

Did you know that more than 20 percent of adults read at or below a fifth grade level – far below the level needed to earn a living wage? Forty-three percent of people with the lowest literacy skills live in poverty. An inability to read has been linked to a multitude of social problems, including crime and teen pregnancy.

The Indiana General Assembly has attempted to help by appropriating \$3.9 million in funding for early intervention (K-3) reading programs. The General Assembly also provided \$6 million to replace old and worn school library books and materials.

If you know of people who would like to obtain a GED, need reading help for their child, need reading help for themselves, want to learn English as a Second Language, want to improve their employment options or who want to go from welfare to work, contact the Literacy Helpline at 1-800-267-9029. The helpline is part of the Indiana Literacy Foundation.

The Indiana Literacy Foundation sponsors statewide programs to encourage people to read. Reach Out and Read (ROAR) is a pediatric literacy initiative to help infants and children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years discover the joys of reading. Developed by pediatricians at Boston Medical Center, ROAR recruits volunteers to conduct reading circles at health facilities. Doctors “prescribe” reading to their young patients, each of whom receives a brand new book after each well care visit.



*Rep. Summers delivers a speech in the House Chamber.*

## Know the Signs of Child Abuse

As a parent, I believe children are one of our most precious resources. Unfortunately, far too many of our children are physically abused. Preventing child abuse will not only benefit society, but will also allow abused children to grow into healthy and active participants in their community.

Children from all social classes can fall victim to abuse. Abuse often occurs at a time of great stress for the abuser.

Some signs parents, teachers, doctors, neighbors and friends might want to watch for with the children they know include:

- hand or finger-shaped bruise marks
- improbable explanation for child's injuries
- scalding patterns, circular burns, as if from a stove, or cigarette burns
- black eyes
- human bite marks
- lash marks
- choke marks around neck

Indiana requires that known or suspected child abuse be reported to the police – so if you suspect a child is in danger, don't hesitate to report it.

Intervention counseling is available and recommended when warning signs such as a previous history of abuse, an apparent lack of parental love or concern, failure to maintain the child's proper hygiene or care, parental drug or alcohol problems and high stress factors in the family life are apparent.

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### *Moments for Indiana children*

*Every 8 minutes a child is reported abused or neglected.*

*Every 43 minutes a baby is born to a teenage mother.*

*Every hour a baby is born at low birthweight.*

*Every 13 hours a baby dies during the first year of life.*

*Every 3 days a child or youth is killed by a gun.*

*Source: Childrens Defense Fund*

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# 2000 Legislative Survey

## Questions

1. Do you believe floor sessions of the Indiana House and Senate should be broadcast on the Internet for public consumption?

2. Should the State of Indiana eliminate the ISTEP program for testing students, and come up with another method of gauging progress in the classroom?

3. Do you believe inducements like enterprise zones and tax abatements are an effective use of tax dollars to spur economic development?

4. Do you support passage of legislation that would allow people to have their names placed on a list that would prohibit telemarketers from calling them?

5. Who should pay the largest share of property taxes?

A. Agriculture    B. Business    C. Homeowners

6. Do you favor passage of legislation that increases penalties against people who commit crimes against someone solely because of racial or sexual orientation?

7. Do you believe that people have the right to hold their health maintenance organizations (HMOs) legally responsible for the health care decision they make?

8. Do you believe that patients should be able to receive drugs prescribed by their doctors without approval from their HMOs?

9. Should the State of Indiana provide funding to school corporations that choose to offer a full day of kindergarten?

## Responses

*Respondent 1*

*Respondent 2*

1.    Yes    No                      Yes    No  
     ☐   ☐                      ☐   ☐

2.    Yes    No                      Yes    No  
     ☐   ☐                      ☐   ☐

3.    Yes    No                      Yes    No  
     ☐   ☐                      ☐   ☐

4.    Yes    No                      Yes    No  
     ☐   ☐                      ☐   ☐

5.    A    B    C                      A    B    C  
     ☐   ☐   ☐                      ☐   ☐   ☐

6.    Yes    No                      Yes    No  
     ☐   ☐                      ☐   ☐

7.    Yes    No                      Yes    No  
     ☐   ☐                      ☐   ☐

8.    Yes    No                      Yes    No  
     ☐   ☐                      ☐   ☐

9.    Yes    No                      Yes    No  
     ☐   ☐                      ☐   ☐

## Your Comments

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Place  
Stamp  
Here

Rep. Vanessa Summers

200 W. Washington St.

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

### House Publications Available

The following publications can be requested free of charge from my Statehouse office by calling 232-9600:

*Relax . . .* -- This informational booklet for senior citizens discusses a variety of issues, from taxes to health problems to leisure activities.

*Higher Education* -- A 24-page publication for those interested in pursuing a higher education degree, detailing many Indiana colleges and universities as well as occupational and vocational schools.

*Guide to State Agencies* -- This booklet details various agencies within Indiana state government, listing phone numbers, functions and general areas of responsibility for each of the state agencies.

*Hoosier Fun and Facts* -- Designed for elementary school-aged children, this information and activity book teaches students about their state through a combination of text, puzzles and other educational activities.

### Attention Teachers

We the People . . . Project Citizen is a civic education program for middle school students. The Indiana House of Representatives will help to facilitate the state finals on May 5, 2000.

For information on how to involve your students, please contact:

Thomas Vontz  
Indiana University  
2805 E. Tenth St.  
Bloomington, IN 47408  
812-855-0467 / 800-266-3815

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